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How does continuing training on social interaction skills benefit teachers?

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Opetus ja oppiminen tapahtuvat opettajan ja oppilaiden keskinaisessa vuorovaikutuksessa ja hyvät vuorovaikutustaidot ovat olennainen osa opettajan ammattitaitoa. Hyvien vuorovaikutustaitojen opettelu ja niitä edistävien tapojen ja käytänteiden luominen sekä vakiinnuttaminen on erittäin suositeltavaa opetuksen ammattilaisille. Nykyisin opettajankoulutus ei riittävästi ohjaa opiskelijoita vuorovaikutustaitojen tietoiseen kehittämiseen.

Tässä tutkimuksessa tutkittiin vuorovaikutustaitokurssin vaikutusta suomalaisten luokanopettajien ja opettajaksi opiskelevien vuorovaikutustaitoihin. Gordonin (2003) vuorovaikutusteoriaan perustuvan kurssin laajuus oli 3op. Tutkimusryhmä koostui kurssilaisista (20 hlöä) sekä verrokkiryhmästä (20 hlöä). Alku- ja loppumittauksessa vuorovaikutustaitoja tutkittiin DCI –mittaria käyttäen (Talvio, Lonka, Kuusela, & Lintunen, 2012). Taitojen luokittelussa käytettiin kvalitatiivista, teorialähtöistä sisällön analyysiä. Tilastolliset erot alku- ja loppumittauksissa saatiin käyttämällä Wilcoxon merkittyjen sijalukujen testiä.

Tulokset olivat selkeät. Intervention jälkeen vuorovaikutuskurssille osallistuneiden kuuntelun, aktiivisen kuuntelun ja minä -viestien tarkoituksenmukainen käyttäminen lisääntyi huomattavasti. Lisäksi heidän vuorovaikutuksensa oli luonteeltaan rakentavampaa verrokkiryhmään verrattuna sisältäen vähemmän vuorovaikutuksen kompastuskiviä. Verrokkiryhmässä eroa alku- ja loppumittauksen välillä ei syntynyt.

Tulosten perusteella voidaan sanoa, että opettajille suunnattu vuorovaikutustaitojen oppimiseen tähtäävä kurssi näytti saavuttavan tavoitteensa. Opettajat oppivat soveltamaan uusia vuorovaikutustaitojaan intervention aikana. Tämän vuoksi tutkimus pyrkii kehittämään opettajien jatkokoulutusta esittämällä helposti toteutettavan tavan parantaa vuorovaikutuksen laatua siinä tarvittavia taitoja opettamalla.

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vuorovaikutustaidot, opetus, oppiminen, sosiaaliset- ja emotionaaliset taidot

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Tiivistelmä - Referat - Abstract

Teaching and learning are interactional processes between the teacher and his or her pupils. Good interaction skills are an essential part of the teacher profession. Learning good interaction skills and creating ways and practices that promote the use of those skills is often recommended. However, the teacher studies do not direct the students to process these skills.

In the present study, it was explored whether comprehensive school teachers of Finland participating in the three credit follow-up training learned to use social interaction skills during the intervention. The studied skills were based on Gordon's theory (2003). The participants were 20 teachers who attended the training, and 20 teachers not attending the training. The effects of the intervention on teachers were examined by using the DCI-instrument (Talvio, Lonka, Kuusela, & Lintunen, 2012). Qualitative, theory-driven content analysis was used to classify the data. The statistical differences between the pre-test and post-test scores were examined with the Wilcoxon signed rank test.

After the intervention, teachers who participated in the training used significantly more listening and active listening skills and communicated in more constructive ways. Furthermore, they used significantly less roadblocks to communication. In the comparison group, no differences between pre- and post-tests were perceived.

To conclude, the teachers' course on social interaction skills appeared to achieve its goals, since the teachers learned to apply the studied skills during the intervention. This study adds to the development of continuing teacher training by presenting a way of teaching students skills that enhance the quality of interaction.

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interaction skills, teaching, learning, social- and emotional skills

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1 Introduction

Teachers interact with tens or even hundreds of pupils every day. In the classroom, their main task is undoubtedly to teach the subject matter. However, to be able to support pupils' learning in the classroom, teachers give feedback, encourage and comfort their pupils. In addition, it is important to deal with (or preferably prevent) pupils' behavioural challenges, such as off-task or sometimes even aggressive behaviour. Thus, teachers' contribution in helping students to collaborate with each other and participate in learning activities is essential. According to previous studies, teachers need continuing education to be able to promote ideal social interaction in the classroom (Talvio, Lonka, Komulainen, Kuusela, & Lintunen, 2013). Ideal class room interaction results to greater school favorableness which in turn has an impact on pupils´ academic learning. In conclusion, teacher interaction is diverse in many ways and during a school day teachers need various skills to maintain successful interaction at school.

According to Schulman (1986) teachers´ *content knowledge* about the subject being taught is not enough to help the student to learn. In addition the teacher needs to have *pedagogical content knowledge*. This means that the teacher should be capable of modifying his or her knowledge into a form that the student is able to understand. Pedagogical content knowledge is the prerequisite of helping the students to learn the matter being taught to them. In addition to content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge the teacher needs *pedagogical knowledge*. Pedagogical knowledge means knowledge about the mechanisms of learning and about supporting the process of learning. This kind of knowledge promotes the students success.

It is also important for a teacher to know what skills should be used in each situation. Hamre, Hatfield, Pianta and Jamil (2014) divided teachers' interactions in classroom into *general* and *domain-specific* elements. Domain-specific elements include teachers' proactive management and routines, motivational support and cognitive facilitation. General elements include specific features of responsive teaching such as cue detection, contingent responding and active engagement. It was suggested that both the elements in effective and targeted interactions are needed in contributing to children's learning and development (Hamre, Hatfield, Pianta, & Jamil, 2014). Thus, competent teachers vary their ways of interacting according to the needs of pupils' growth.

Teachers´ capability to vary their ways of interacting with students plays an important role in their students learning. To describe the perceptions the pupils have of the interactive behaviour of the teacher, Brekelmans et al (2005) use a model that describes interpersonal relationships.

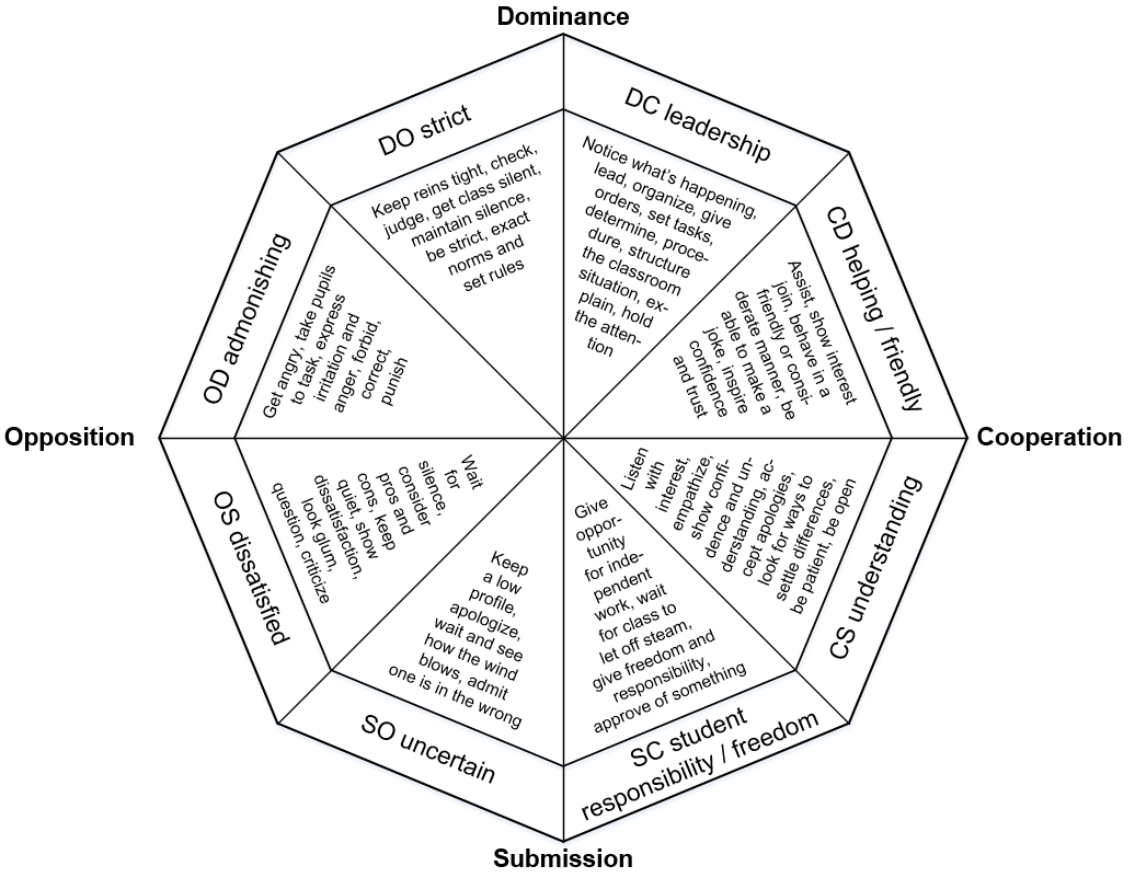

Figure 1, Model for interpersonal teacher behavior (Brekelmans;den Brok;van Tartwijk;& Wubbels, 2005)

The sections in the Figure 1 are labeled DC, CD, CS etc according to their position in the co-ordinate system. The two sectors "leadership" and helping/friendly are both characterized by Dominance and Cooperation. In the DC sector the Dominance aspect predominates over the Cooperation aspect. A teacher carrying DC-type of behavior might be considered by the pupils as motivating and enthusiastic. The CD-sector next to it includes behaviors of a more cooperative and less dominant type of a teacher. This kind of a teacher may be seen as helpful, friendly and obliging. Figure 1 presents an overview of typical teacher behaviors that are related to each of the eight sectors of the model. The behaviors that appear on the right side of the middle line are experienced as

more pleasurable than the ones on the left side. Furthermore the most appealing and motivating ones are the type CD and CS behaviors.

In addition to the interactive situations with the pupils a teacher needs to collaborate with other actors as well, such as the colleagues and pupils' parents. The legislation concerning national curriculum obligates teachers to collaborate with pupils´ parents (Basic Education Act, 1998/2010). While collaborating with the parents, teachers are quite often in a position where they need to give feedback about the pupils' actions at school as well as of the parents´ task in upbringing their children. The parents may also need encouraging and empathic attitude especially when they find challenges in their upbringing task or in matters concerning their children´s learning or in the events of their family in general. In many cases the information from the teacher to the parents is given via e-mail which is an effective way of giving information about the happenings at school. On the other hand the teacher has no way of knowing about the circumstances surrounding the parent receiving the message. A message that is not composed with thought and diligence may turn out to be fatal to future collaboration between the teacher and the parent. It should be beared in mind that feedback is not the same thing as critique. Positive aspects about students' behaviour are as valuable to take notice of as their challenges are.

Teachers' skilful ways of interacting with the members of the school community are not relevant only because of the interaction itself. Teachers are also role-models whose interactive behaviours show the pupils how respectful adults communicate and take care of problems (Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Thus, by looking at adults, pupils determine the appropriateness of the behaviour (Bandura, 1977). For a pupil's growth, that example can be either positive or negative (Hurd, Zimmerman, & Xue, 2009). In addition, by using interaction skills, teachers create an autonomy supportive climate in the classroom and promote an atmosphere for students to feel included (Leroy, Bressoux, Sarrazin, & Trouilloud, 2007). For example, listening to pupils about their difficulties, instead of giving straight answers, help pupils to solve their own problems, and thus regulate their own learning. To conclude, the need for teachers' social interaction skills is vast, to enable taking care of all the tasks that the teaching profession demands not only in the classroom but in other contexts where the teacher is recommended to be active. In some cases that means ac-

tive collaboration with other professional educators within the same area, i.e. coaches and other actors in the youth organizations. Their impact on the quality of children's free time is often significant and therefore collaborating and creating mutual understanding is desirable. Discussing joint values in education and upbringing requires good interaction skills from the participants. This in turn offers the children an environment where their growth is supported by adults with shared values.

Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) is a non-profitable organization advancing the development of academic, social and emotional competence (www.casel.org). Their mission is to help make evidence-based social and emotional learning (SEL) an integral part of education from preschool through high school. The concept of SEL means a learning process during which key skills needed for life management are embraced (Durlak et al., 2011; Casel, 2013). With the concept of social and emotional learning (SEL) social interaction skills can be linked with learning and development in educational psychology. SEL is defined as a comprehensive approach to reduce risk factors, and foster protective mechanisms for positive life development. SEL includes the skills that are needed to regulate oneself and human relationships (Durlak et al., 2011). The proximal goals of SEL programmes are to foster the development of five components of SEL, namely, self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision making (Zins & Elias, 2006).

Teachers are able to improve their social and emotional competence through developing the components of their SEL. By improving their self-awareness, teachers learn to recognize their own emotions and emotional patterns, tendencies and own capabilities, as well as their own weaknesses and strengths. By developing their social awareness, they understand the emotions of others and also, how their emotions affect their interaction with others. By fostering their relationship skills, they are able to build strong and supportive relationships, and can effectively negotiate solutions to conflict situations. They are also culturally sensitive and understand perspectives of other people. Finally, teachers with good competence in social and emotional learning make responsible decisions that respect others involved (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009).

Even though social interaction skills are basic and essential tools in the teaching profession, they have necessarily not been thoroughly studied in teacher training (Lintunen,

2006; Scott & Nelson, 1999). According to Jennings and Greenberg (2009), the general assumption is that teachers adopt the social interaction skills as part of their teacher's role. Elliot et al. (2011) supported this, by suggesting that social interaction skills are part of the tacit knowledge of the teaching profession and are thus not, easily communicated, and therefore not systematically taught or studied. According to Auli Toom (2006) it is possible to define teacher´s pedagogical authority as a part of the content of tacit content knowing. According to Toom, the teacher´s pedagogical authority means their personal commitment to the work. Despite this, the teacher is not an authority in having information she or he can pass on to her or his students. In any case, the lack of research in this field could possibly be explained by the lack of a scientific approach to social interaction skills in teacher training. Since they are not considered as a part of pedagogical methods that can be developed, they are not worth researching.

Previous studies (Talvio, Lonka, Kuusela, & Lintunen, 2012; Talvio et al., 2013; Talvio, 2014) indicated, however, that there are such interaction skills that can be learned and that will benefit teachers. The participants attended Gordon's Teacher Effectiveness Training (2014), and the quantitative and qualitative change in their knowledge and their applied knowledge were investigated. The TET course consisted of social interaction skills, such as listening skills and sending I-messages, which give feedback in constructive way, and avoiding so called road blocks that might hinder effective interaction i.e., judging and ordering. The results showed that teachers' constructive ways of communicating in challenging situations improved. During the interaction course, teachers learned the above-mentioned skills, and were able to apply the studied skills in given situations. In addition, teachers' ability in supporting pupils' autonomy improved. To conclude, teachers benefitted from training in social interaction skills. The skills also appeared to be somewhat sustainable, because after nine months, teachers still remembered the central skills, and were able to reflect their own behaviour from the perspective of the TET skills (Talvio, Lonka, Komulainen, Kuusela, & Lintunen, in press). Barton-Arwood et al. (2005) came to a similar conclusion. The participants were 22 female educators working at elementary or high school level. During one-day interaction training, the changes in participants' knowledge and their perceptions of their development in social interaction skills were tested. All their results indicated increased learning of the studied skills during the training.

There has been increased research in education about how emotional-regulation skills, social-cognition skills, and positive communicative behaviours are developed (Brophy-Herb, Lee, Nievar, & Stollak, 2007). Also, there is research available about interaction programs in school, but most of it is focused on the students (Lintunen, 2006). Active research in the area of social interaction skills is provided in health sciences, medical-, and communication education. According to a systematic literature review (Aspegren, 1999), communication skills can be taught and learnt during courses, but are easily forgotten if not habitually practiced. It was also found that basic skills can be learnt during a short period of training. Surprisingly little research exists about how teachers develop and improve social and emotional skills necessary for them to collaborate with each other, and facilitate pro-social behaviours with their students.

In the present study it was explored whether the teachers participating in a follow-up training on social interaction skills became more competent in social and emotional learning (SEL). There is some evidence that the teachers participating in in-house training learned the studied skills (Talvio, 2014). The intention of this study, however, was to explore the possible benefits for teachers during an open course.

The will and interest to study the benefits of an interaction course arouse from many years of work as a teacher working with children with social and emotional challenges. The Gordon –model had already proven to be an effective and practical tool for coping with many types of interactional situations successfully.

2 Gordon´s interaction theory

Dr. Thomas Gordon was an American clinical psychologist and colleague of Carl Rogers who was an influential American psychologist and among the founders of the humanistic approach (or client-centered approach) to psychology. Instead of focusing on problems and weaknesses humanistic psychology emphasizes the strengths and potentials of human beings. Thomas Gordon developed a model for training teachers´ social interaction skills and based his work on humanistic psychology already in the 1960s.

Gordon's model (2003) provides concrete tools for improving teacher's competence of SEL. Humanistic psychology and its idea of individuals having the will to develop themselves influenced Gordon's thinking. By using tools provided by Gordon's theory, receiving and sending messages may be more effective. The skills taught include Listening skills, I –Messages and avoiding Road blocks. Active listening is a special method of a listening skill in which the listener reflects back to the speaker his or her understanding of what the speaker has said (Ivey, Bradford Ivey, & Zalaquett, 2009). An I-Message is a statement that describes the speaker's feelings and experiences (Adams, 1989). By using positive or confrontation I-Messages that are special cases of I –messages (Gordon, 2003), constructive feedback can be given. In contrast, messages that damage fruitful interaction are called Road blocks (Gordon, 2003).

2.1 Listening

In order to live a healthy life, people need social interaction with others. In social situations it is possible to get acquainted with other people, their opinions and values. It also offers the chance to reflect opinions and values to those of others. In addition, valuable information about ourselves can be received while making comparisons to other people.

In order to obtain knowledge about the thoughts and values of the others, it is vital to stop to listen to what they have to tell. Listening invites people to tell about the things possibly bothering them, it triggers emotions and provides feelings of relief. Listening leaves the responsibility to the one having the problem and assists to identify emotions involved. It also works as an indication of willingness to help and of approval of the other person as he or she is (Gordon, 2003).

According to Thomas Gordon´s theory (2003) silence, or so called passive listening is a powerful non-verbal message that can administer the feeling of being genuinely approved of and encourage to tell more. Gordon underlines that people cannot tell you about what is bothering them if you keep talking all the time.

Despite listening seeming an easy task to accomplish, it includes challenges that are important to indentify. Amongst the competing stimuli and the rushing events of everyday life it is good to notice, that listening is not possible without being able to set aside other tasks, such as reading a newspaper or watching TV. In order to experience the feeling being heard an eye contact is needed with the one listening. Furthermore, the listener needs to indicate concentration by settling into a posture that establishes the will to listen (www.gordontraining.com).

2.2 Active listening

Active listening is one of the central skills in Gordon´s (2003) theory. Active listening could as well be called therapeutic listening. The difference between listening and active listening is that during active listening the listener reflects back to the speaker how he or she perceived the message as well as the emotions related to the message.

Active listening requires emotional tuning. This kind of tuning means paying attention that is beyond a momentary feeling of empathy and creates a rich, long lasting feeling of being fully present and available. This in turn helps to create and corroborate harmony. Active listening is not a method of solving the speaker's problems for him or her but rather a method of offering a reflection of how the listener hears and understands the speaker's emotions and situation being told. Daniel Goleman calls this kind of tuning "deep listening" (Goleman, 1995). According to Goleman deep listening or active listening seems to be a natural ability which, like other components of social intelligence, may yet be enforced by practise. This kind of tuning is facilitated by conscious awareness of the speaker.

2.3 I-Messages

Speaking about ones emotions, needs, hopes and thoughts is often difficult. People have a tendency to resort to sulking, avoidance or other actions. In those cases it is most dif-

ficult to interpret the message causing the chosen actions and understand the reasons behind the actions. Misunderstandings are difficult to avoid.

Using I-Messages is an efficient and practical tool for expressing oneself. By using I-Messages it is possible to depict the inner realities of the one speaking: emotions, hopes, thoughts and needs. I-Messages do not include evaluations or interpretations of others, therefore they are likely to arouse understanding, approval and willingness to collaborate. They consist of three parts; description of the behaviour, tangible or concrete effect of the behaviour and the feeling that the behaviour causes. For example: "When you don´t do your homework (description of the behaviour), it takes more time and work for me to teach this lesson (Tangible effect) and I feel very frustrated(feeling)." The sequence (behaviour- effect-feeling) communicates that the feeling is being blamed on the effect, not the student´s behaviour (Gordon, 2003 pp. 144—145) I-Messages can be divided roughly into adhering to problems-, positive- and explanatory I-Messages (Gordon, 2003).

2.4 Roadblocks to Communication

According to Gordon (2003) most teachers are capable to detect and sense the feelings and problems of pupils but the problem is that the teacher is incapable of reacting in a functional and effective manner. Gordon assigns the term roadblocks to communication to methods that are non-functional, ineffective and cause misunderstandings. Gordon divides these roadblocks in twelve categories, which are:

1. Ordering, commanding, directing
2. Warning, threatening
3. Moralizing, preaching
4. Advising, offering complete solutions, suggesting
5. Teaching, lecturing
6. Condemning, criticising, dissent, accusation
7. Name-calling, humiliating, classification
8. Interpretation, analysing, making conclusions
9. Praising, being of the same opinion
10. Calming down, comforting, accompaniment

11. Questioning, inquiring, interrogating
12. Withdrawing, changing subjects, picking, playing games

This kind of a message containing roadblocks will easily be experienced as non-accepting, judgemental, labelling or bossy and will therefore typically weaken respect between the parties and therefore discourage the pupil's autonomy and activity. When a teacher stumbles on the roadblocks to communication e.g. by using expressions like "typical", "everybody knows that" or "this is exactly what it is all about", the teacher positions her-/himself as an expert in relation to her/his pupil. This means that persons take certain positions in interaction and reciprocally strengthen the negative position of the pupil. This results in a negative perimeter, in which the student also may have expectations that the teacher bears responsibility for improving her/his situation. Hence, the expertise of the teacher is strengthened by the position the pupil has taken. When wanting to develop a relationship in which the other person may grow, develop, learn how to solve problems, accomplish more and to be more creative, it is important to accept the other person as she/he is. An accepting language frees a person to talk about her/his problems and feeling. This kind of a relationship may be accomplished by implementing the skills of interaction Gordon has taught. (Talvio et al., 2013; Gordon, 2003; Talvio, 2014)

3 Interaction skills

It has been shown that interaction skills can be taught as well as learned (Talvio, 2014). In the present study the main focus is on learning and practising those skills in a new context on a separate course organized by Open University of Helsinki.

In teachers profession interaction situations are often challenging. This is because of the vast variation of different situations and circumstances and also since there are several interactions ongoing at the same time. A teacher should be able to pay attention to not only the interaction between the teacher and the pupils but also to the interactions between the peers as well as to the quality, nature and the consequences of those actions. In order to succeed in these actions a teacher should first be capable of self reflection necessary for self-awareness, have ability to recognize his or her own emotions and emotional patterns, tendencies and own capabilities, as well as his or her own weaknesses and strengths. Recognizing ones reactions to emotional stimuli is also important. Without the skills mentioned above, a teacher is in danger of getting exhausted with the endless variety of possible actions in each type of interactional situation.

According to self-determination theory (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Deci & Ryan, 2002), fostering autonomy, creativity and intrinsic motivation are also important. This is why supporting pupils autonomy is one of teachers´ important tasks. It is also important that the teachers themselves experience autonomy and self-efficacy as well as have belief in their ability to foster their pupils´ learning.

To investigate teaches social and emotional skills Talvio et al developed the Dealing with Challenging Interaction (DCI) -method. The purpose of the DCI-method is to measure teachers´ behaviour (specifically readiness to apply knowledge). Their study teachers were asked to describe their reactions to the seven challenging but typical scenarios at work. In the present study, however, there were five scenarios and each task consisted of a description of a common event concerning school work and a question with which the respondent was asked to describe in a few lines how he or she would react in that event. For example, in an event that concerns active listening, the teacher was asked how he or she would react to an annoyed phone call of a pupils´ mother who is concerned of her child´s safety and behaving accusingly. The other cases concerned

confronting a colleague, thanking a pupil, confronting misbehaved pupils and confronting a pupil who has been calling the teacher names behind his or her back. These cases were developed by the author and further reviewed with academic colleagues.

4 On usefulness of interactive skills

Growing body of literature suggests many positive impacts as for mastering interactive skills and the growing need of hereof in the future. In Jokinen's (2000, pp. 74–75) research on the future prospects of education and teaching most of the experts in teaching emphasized that more and more co-operational and interactive skills are required from the pupils in the future. Increasingly proactive and student-lead methods will be used, such as cooperative learning and project work. Both students and teachers must have skills in emotion mastering and interaction in order for this type of work to succeed (Kuusela, 2005, p. 20).

There is already some information on programs that develop interaction skills (Durlak et al., 2011) and the perception is that they have a wide positive impact on pupils. The implication of the programs has resulted in better conduct, a more positive attitude towards oneself, others and school in general. This had lead to improvement in schoolwork. In addition, misconduct, depression and the use of drugs has decreased and there is no sign of decrease as for the positive impact in the long run. It is significant that the positive impact on achievements in school is nearly double compared with the results obtained by decreasing the amount of pupils in the class. (Lintunen, 2009a; CASEL, 2013). There was no difference between which program was implicated, as long as the implication was done systematically (Durlak et al., 2011).

The fundamentals of the teaching of the Finnish Basic Education Plan (2004, pp. 38–39) also include many objectives and contents related to interactive skills. Central contents to be taught in association with all curricula are e.g. identifying feelings and handling them, to take others into account, rights, duties and responsibilities in a group as well as various methods of cooperation. Another objective is that the student learns how to express her-/himself in a versatile and responsible manner and interpret communication from others. The assessment criteria in health knowledge also mentions skills related to feelings and interaction, although on a very informational level. The criteria include descriptions of an execution of skills required for each grade of student assessment (Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteet 2004, p. 202).

5 Making use of Skills in Feelings and Interaction at School

Developing the interaction skills of teachers has been observed to increase their empathy and skills to handle various interactive situations. Good interaction skills with students aid the teacher to be more efficient, hence also improving learning results. (Lintunen, 2009a; Gordon, 2003). The teacher's interaction skills have a significant impact also on developing the self-image of the pupils, especially regarding their own image of themselves as learners (Hotulainen, 2003, pp. 44–46). This idea is also supported by Lev Vygotsky's (1934/1986) idea that e.g. in an educational relationship, it is important that the educator expects the best the child can achieve, whereupon the child also wants to fulfil the expectation.

Vygotsky's zone of proximal development is an important concept that elaborates the dimensions of school learning. It explores the idea that the kind of skills that children can rehearse and achieve with the assistance of others (in social interaction) may be more indicative of their mental development than what they can do alone (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 85). Vygotsky (1978) proposed "that an essential feature of learning is that it creates the zone of proximal development; that is, learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers. Once these processes are internalized, they become part of the child's independent developmental achievement" (p. 90). This is different from the traditional model for instruction in which a teacher aims to transmit information to students. Vygotsky's theory aims to supporting learning contexts where students play an active role in learning. Functional interaction with pupils and experiencing joint success are also central sources in a teacher's job, providing job satisfaction and strength to continue working (Kiviniemi, 2000, p. 75).

A teacher's job may also be examined by means of various entities of competence, thereby clearly separating substance competence or, process competence and interaction competence from each other, as has been mentioned above. Areas of competence should not be split into too small areas as this would easily lead into a far too technical breakdown (Mönkkönen, 2007, p. 36). According to Mönkkönen, substance competence comprises of essential knowledge and skills that are complemented through the different competences others have. Process competence comprises the skill to navigate changes

in a reasonable way that will make use of the participants' insights and provide opportunity to be creative. Regarding this competence, it is important to set targets together, to divide change into steps and to evaluate it (Lonka & Ahola, 1995). Interactive competence is associated with the capability to communicate interactively with the pupils, their guardians, and other professionals. Separating fields of competence allows for all fields of work in teaching to be observed. The fields of competence to be observed are:

- How can a teacher's actions be assessed as substance competence, process competence and interaction competence?
- Why isn't knowledge enough in a teaching job?
- What kind of ethical principles guide the actions of a teacher and what kind of conflict situations might a teacher encounter regarding them?
- How can working communities promote equality among both pupils and the members of the working community?

To strive for equality implies abandoning expert-centred interaction. A teacher might tend to demonstrate her/his competency by explaining issues and this is what pupils often await from her/him. Schulman (1986) calls this part of teacher actions *content knowledge.* The pupil's expectation that the teacher will solve her/his problems easily makes a teacher respond to this need. It is, though, a completely other issue to try to understand a pupil's life situation and the potential problems it implies and to help the pupil to find keys to the solution by her-/himself instead of explaining from the teacher's point of view why issues really occur. Thus the pupil's own responsibility is neglected or the pupil is not given this responsibility. According to Schulman this calls for Pedagogical Content Knowledge. An expert-centred procedure or Pedagogical Knowledge implies the power to define the situation, classify problems and to decide on actions and working methods (Mönkkönen, 2007, p. 38; Schulman, 1986).

6 Method

An increasing amount of research data shows how skills in controlling feelings, social skills as well as positive skills in communicative behaviour develop (Brophy-Herb, Lee, Nievar, & Stollak, 2007). In addition, there is much information about programs aimed at developing interactive skills but the majority of these programs usually relate to pupils (Lintunen, 2006). This research concerning children´s social and emotional learning has also received some criticism concerning the implementation of the skills, the assessment of the matters being taught and the reliability of the research in the outcome of the SEL (Huphrey, 2013). Health sciences and medical as well as communication education provide active research on interaction skills. The research also showed that basic skills may be learned even during a short course. There is surprisingly little research on how teachers may develop and improve their social and emotional skills that are necessary as for positive cooperation and pro-social activities with the pupils.

6.1 Research questions

As it has been stated before, research on continuous training of teachers SEL has been scarce. In addition little is known about what kind of courses are effective and how the studied skills can be applied at work (Humphrey, 2014). The purpose of this study was to find some answers to how teachers may develop their social and emotional skills and to investigate if TET is a useful and effective tool for developing these skills. The aim was approached through the following research questions.

Research questions:

1. Did the teachers participating the interaction course use more skills of listening, active listening and sending an I-message?
2. Was there a change in the number of roadblocks to communication between pre- and post test measurement?
3. Was there a difference between the participants and the comparison group in their learning of these skills in pre- and post test measurement?
4. Was there a qualitative difference in pre- and post test answers?

6.2 Participants

The participants were 40 teachers from Finland working in comprehensive schools. The intervention group consisted of 20 teachers participating in the training of social interaction skills and the comparison group consisting of 20 teachers not participating in the training. The course was open to anybody, and the participants were accepted to the course in the order of registration. The mean value of the course participants' age was 37 (SD = 10.47) and on average, they had plenty of credits from previous studies (M = 177.13, SD = 63.16). The course participants typically had slightly less than five years of teaching experience (M = 4.46, SD = 6.62). Of the 20 course participants, three were men.

The comparison group consisted of teachers participating in another course that did not include studies of social interaction skills. The data were collected approximately at the same time from both the intervention group and the comparison groups. By using the Chi-square test, it was concluded that the background (age, gender, amount of studies and work experience) of the members of the comparison group and intervention group was quite similar, thus making them suitable for comparing the effects of the intervention.

6.3 Context of the study and procedures

The intervention explored in this study was a three-credit course organized at the special education department of the Open University of Helsinki. The intention of the course was to increase the participants' understanding of emotions and social interaction in learning, and of teachers' responsibility for creating a supportive learning environment. Lectures, demonstrations, practice, reflection in small groups, self-studying and learning diaries were used as teaching methods of the course, which was organised on five afternoons an over two-week period during school holidays. The course included studies of Gordon's theory (2003) and SEL, which were approached from the viewpoint of modern educational psychology (Durlak et al., 2011).

6.4 Measures and data analyses

The data were collected in the two weeks right before (pre-test) and right after (post-test) the intervention. The questionnaire used to collect the data in both pre- and post-tests was a modified version of the Dealing with Challenging Interaction (DCI) instrument (Talvio et al., 2012; Talvio et al., 2013; Talvio et al., in press), including five descriptions of challenging situations at school. These challenging situations given were typical for teachers when dealing with their pupils, pupils' parents and teachers' colleagues. The participants were to write in their own words how they would respond to these given situations.

The answers were content analysed, classified and quantified (Frey, Botan, Friedman, & Kreps, 1992; Weber, 1990) in categories that were drawn from Gordon's theory (2003). During the process of classification, peer debriefing was utilized in an effort to achieve consensual validation, and thereby increase the credibility of the analysis. The author, responsible for the process of analysis, consulted the peers regularly, to discuss any difficulties that arose during the analysis. During peer debriefing, when perspectives differed, discussion was used to achieve consensus.

Altogether five categories, namely Listening, Active listening, I-messages, Road blocks and Supporting autonomy, were used as category variables. In each category, an answer was given the possible numerical value of either 0 or 1 to show the presence of the category in the answer. The mean values and standard deviation values of the categories' sum variables were then calculated. The DCI method is described in more detail elsewhere. (Talvio et al., 2012; Talvio et al., 2013; Talvio et al., in press)

By exploring the possible differences of the background variables between the intervention and the comparison groups, a Chi-square test was conducted. The statistical differences in pre-test and in post-test scores between the intervention and comparison groups were tested with the Mann-Whitney test, and the scores between pre- and post- tests were examined by using the related samples Wilcoxon signed rank test. The possible associations between background variables and the change in the intervention group were examined using the Kruskal-Wallis test. The sum scores were calculated by adding up the remainders of the pre- and post-test scores in each category.

7 Results

7.1 Quantitative results

The starting level of the studied skills might affect learning during a course. For example, if the participants know the studied skills already before the training, their learning does not necessarily increase. Therefore, before the intervention of the current study, the results are presented by first exploring the differences in the levels of the studied skills between the intervention and comparison groups. The possible changes during the intervention will then be examined. Finally, the differences between the intervention and the comparison groups in the post-test will be provided.

Table 1 shows that there were no statistical differences in the use of Listening, Active listening or I-messages between the intervention and the comparison groups in the pre-test. However, the intervention group used significantly more Supporting autonomy-messages and significantly fewer Road blocks than the comparison group before the intervention.

Figures 1 and 2 show that there was a significant interaction, showing that the participants of the interaction course used significantly more Listening and Active listening ($p < .01$) after the intervention. However, no statistical changes were found among the comparison group between the pre-test and the post-test.

Table 1, Mean values, standard deviations and their statistical significances between intervention and comparison groups in each category before the intervention

	Intervention group (n=20)	Comparison group (n=20)	
Studied skills	*M(SD)*	*M(SD)*	*p*
Listening	0.30(0.47)	0.10(0.31)	.289
Active listening	0.05(0.23)	0.05(0.22)	1.000
I-messages	0.30(0.57)	0.15(0.37)	.565
Road blocks	2.60(1.60)	3.95(1.32)	.003*
Supporting autonomy	0.80(0.52)	0.30(0.47)	.011*

Note. * $p < .05$

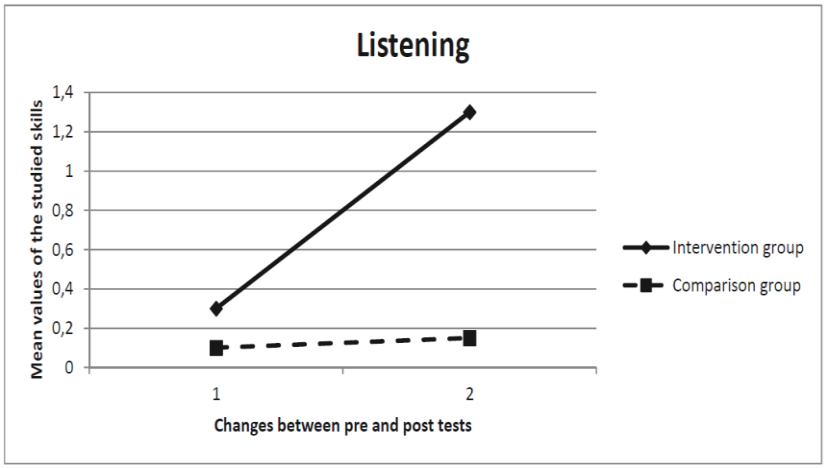

Figure 2, Change between the pre-and post-test in Listening

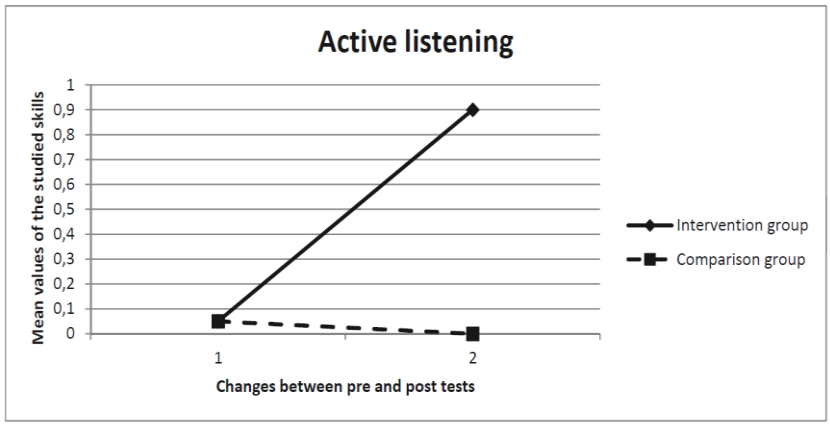

Figure 3, Change between the pre-and post-test in Active listening

I-messages were also used significantly more ($p < .001$) after the course than before the intervention. Road blocks were used significantly less ($p < .001$) after the intervention. In the comparison group, no statistical changes between the pre-test and the post-test were found (Figures 3-4).

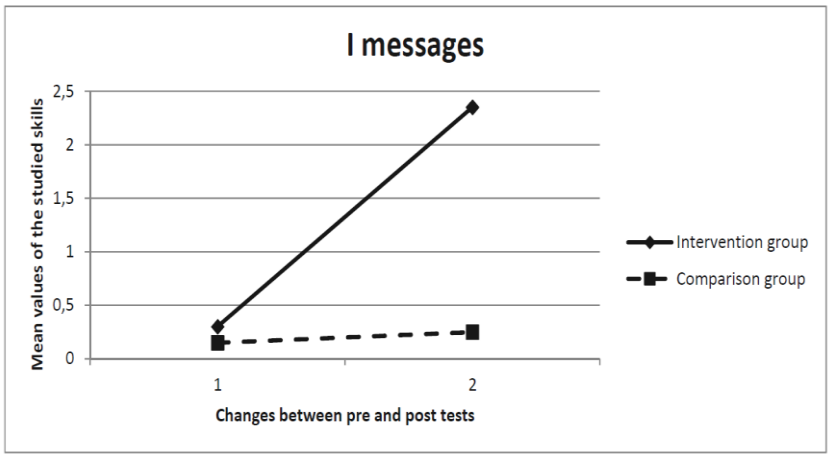

Figure 4, Change between the pre-and post-test in I-messages

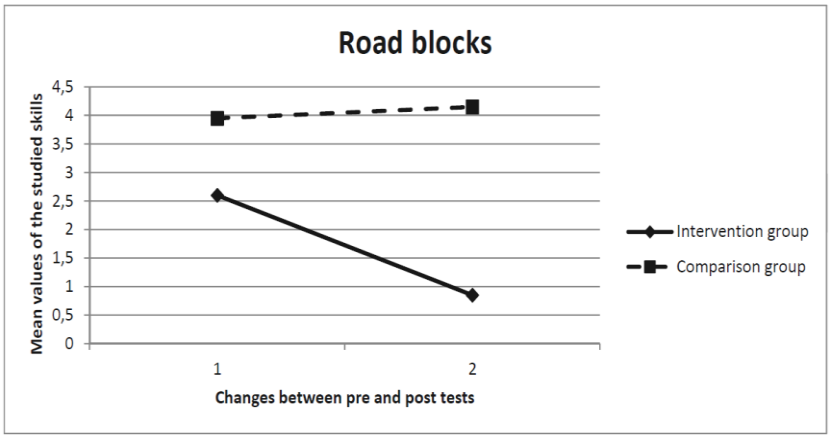

Figure 5, Change between the pre-and post-test in Road blocks

In the Supporting autonomy category, no statistical change (p = .79) was observed during the interaction course among the intervention group. However, the participants of the comparison group used significantly more (p = .013) messages of Supporting autonomy at the second measuring point (Figure 5).

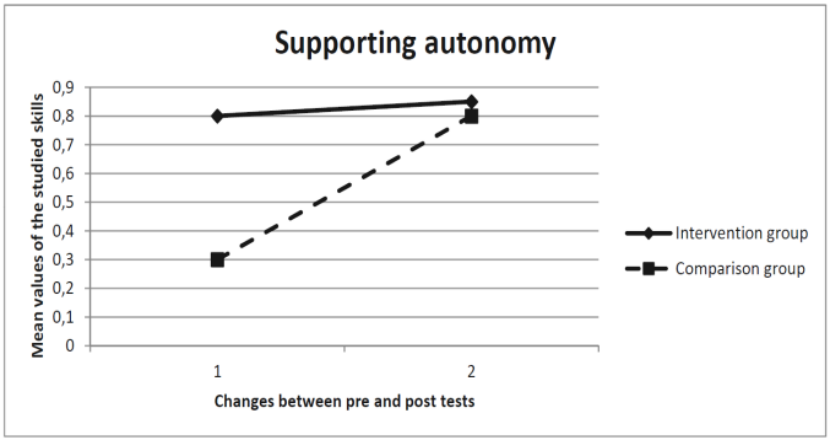

Figure 6, Change between pre-test and post-test in Supporting autonomy

Table 2 shows that after the interaction course, the intervention group used significantly more messages of Listening and Active listening categories, than the comparison group. Similar trend was seen also in I-messages category. In addition, after the course, the intervention group used significantly less Road blocks than the comparison group. After the training, however, the difference in the use of Supporting autonomy between the interaction and comparison groups was not significant.

Table 2, Mean values, standard deviations and their statistical significances between intervention and comparison groups in each category after the intervention

	Intervention group (n=20)	Comparison group (n=20)	
Studied skills	*M(SD)*	*M(SD)*	*p*
Listening	1.30(0.47)	0.15(0.37)	.001*
Active listening	0.90(0.23)	0.00(0.00)	.002*
I-messages	2.35(0.57)	0.25(0,44)	.000*
Road blocks	0.85(1.60)	4.15(1.46)	.000*
Supporting autonomy	0.85(0.52)	0.80(0.52)	.127

Note. * $p < .05$

Finally, the possible impact of gender, age, amount of previous studies or work experience affecting the change in SEL during the course was investigated. No associations between these background variables and learning the studied skills were found.

7.2 Qualitative results

As mentioned above, before the intervention, very few answers were classified in the Listening or Active listening categories. After the training, however, listening was mentioned in many answers as a word, or, it was described by using other words as the following example demonstrates: *'I let the mother talk and I listen until she no longer looks indignant'* or *'I am quiet and let the mother talk'*. Also in the Active listening category, there were answers including mentions of that method, for example, *'I would let Tom's mother vent her feelings by using active listening. It helps her feel that she is being listened to and her feelings are being understood'*. However, in most cases, active listening was not mentioned by name, but instead described as a process of active listening, for example, *'I let Tom's mother talk on the phone about her worries and calm down. I listen to her and I repeat her feelings to be clear about them'* or *'I listen to my colleague's reproofs and then I condense her message by saying that you are annoyed about not having a common course of this matter'*.

Road blocks that included humiliation existed (before the intervention course) in teachers' answers: *'First I would praise their "beautiful art" and then I would tell them that drawing on the wall is prohibited'*. These road blocks disappeared during the intervention. Before the intervention it was also typical that the feedback given were road blocks, such as; questioning, *'Do you think you should apologize?'*, threatening, *'I will explain the consequences'* or ranting, *'I will tell him or her that calling someone names, whether they be pupils or teachers, is not appropriate'*. After the intervention, the answers included usually described teachers' own feelings, the behaviour of a pupil and tangible consequences, in other words I-messages, as the following example describes: *'I am annoyed about your comment of my poor action in that situation. It makes me distrust my teaching skills'*. However, lecturing as a type of road block still existed in some answers after the intervention: *'I am really sorry about the situation but I can't help saying that Tom himself has behaved aggressively. I guarantee that we will discuss this at school and in class as well as with the boys. However, I would like you to talk at home with Tom about this and his earlier behaviour'*.

As mentioned, the number of teachers' answers classified in the Supporting autonomy category did not change significantly during the intervention. The quality of these answers did not change during the intervention either. A typical answer in this category stressed the pupil's need for trust shown by a teacher and an experience of autonomy, as the following example describes: *'In the confidential posts that have been agreed together, a pupil really needs teacher's trust and the experience of success. I believe that if pupils feel that they are being trusted their behavioural problems will decrease'*.

8 Discussion

The aim of present study was to investigate possible changes occurring during the course in teachers' thinking with regard to social and emotional learning (SEL), within typical situations at school. It can be concluded that after the training, teachers' skills to communicate in constructive ways increased, and cases of hindering interaction decreased. Teachers learned to receive messages in a helpful way, by using listening and active listening skills. In addition, in their answers after the course, teachers often used I-messages that were very rare before the intervention. Hence, teachers learned to express their feelings, describe the behaviour in a neutral way and communicate the concrete consequences of the behaviour. Among the comparison group, no change was perceived between the pre-test and the post-test.

However, teachers' messages that support autonomy did not increase during the SEL course. It is possible that teachers really did not learn supporting autonomy on the course. In fact, the course did not explicitly provide skills to support pupils' autonomy, but as a result of constructive ways of communicating, the teachers' skills implicitly tend to support pupils' autonomy. It is possible, however, that the teachers learned to support pupil's autonomy, but the modified version of the DCI-method used in the present study could not capture the teachers' learning. This assumption might explain why messages of supporting autonomy increased significantly without any training among the comparison group. In any case, conclusions of teachers' supporting autonomy can't be made by using the results of the present study. Another limitation was that the sample was quite small. More participants should be investigated to generalize the results. On the other hand, the use of mixed methods compensated the smallness of the sample and deepened the results achieved by using quantitative methods. Furthermore, excluding supporting autonomy, the results were similar to previous studies, thus concurrent validity was supported.

In addition, since the teachers attended the course on a voluntarily basis, they were likely to be motivated to develop their skills in SEL. Thus, we cannot conclude that teachers always benefit from such courses, only that motivated teachers appeared to learn the skills during the intervention. This is relevant when organizing SEL courses for the entire staff of a school. When developing the culture of social interaction at

school, it is important that every professional in the school community attends the training. However, participants who feel they are forced to attend the training will probably not benefit from it. In the light of the results of the present study we cannot ensure that SEL courses organized for an entire school staff will always improve the culture of social interaction of the school. On the other hand, motivation may be increased if the school staff, including its administration, is involved in the SEL process. Hence, it is important that teachers' motivation should be supported, to enable them benefitting from courses in SEL. This is also recommended by Jennings and Greenberg (2009). : Overall, teachers' readiness to change (Weiner, 2009) would be a vital factor to take into notice if the whole school community participated in the TET course. In this case, the teachers were willing to participate in the training so the aspect of readiness to change was not seen important to explore.

There are, however, quite a few advantages to this study. It is quite common that the courses are evaluated only by asking for the participants' feedback. It is also quite typical to investigate the change in teachers' perceptions about social interaction skills (Barton-Arwood, Morrow, Lane, & Jolivette, 2005). It is easy to collect such data but they do not necessarily tell much about learning. Another, more advanced way to investigate the outcome of courses is to test the participants' development of their knowledge although it does not tell whether the participants can apply the skills. The results of the present study suggested that the teachers who participated in this relatively short course were able to apply knowledge in a more constructive way. Even though we cannot prove that the teachers started to use their new skills in real situations, we infer that a change took place in applying knowledge, which is the precondition for changing behaviour. By using the DCI-method in this study, the difference in teachers' ways of thinking about their behaviour during the SEL course could quite easily be captured.

This study showed that even the well-trained teachers do not necessarily know how to interact in constructive ways with their pupils, if the training of social interaction skills is not provided. Finland, for example, has reaped many rewards in international comparisons of school achievements (Mullis, Martin, Foy, & Arora, 2012; Mullis, Martin, Foy, & Drucker, 2012; OECD, 2013), thanks to teachers with a high expertise in the subject they teach (Ahtee, Lavonen, & Pehkonen, 2008; Sarjala, 2005). However, there are several studies showing pupils' relationships and school enjoyment in Finland is

poor compared to other countries (Currie, et al., 2008; Samdal, Dür, & Freeman, 2004). We suggest that instead of domain-specific skills, teacher training should be focused more on general pedagogical skills that lead to safe learning environment, participation, well-being and strong relationships. Our results showed that teachers learned the studied skills, and were able to use those skills in interactions driven from the real school situations. Hence, according to the present study, more systematic training on social interaction skills and SEL might be needed in teacher education.

Approximately 100.000 pupils from various parts of Finland in school-attending age responded to the 'so called National school health survey (2013)'. The research showed i.e. that 24 % of the respondents felt that they are not heard and 56% thought that the teachers are not interested in what's new in the pupils' lives. In addition, 68% of the respondents felt that adults in the school had not intervened with bullying. This research also showed that the pupils did not really believe in the possibilities of making an impact themselves as 43% thought that they did not know how to make an impact on school matters. This is quite contrary to Albert Bandura´s (1989) notions over none being more central than people´s beliefs about their capabilities to exercise control over the events that affect their lives. Bandura states that self-efficacy beliefs function as an important set of proximal determinants of human motivation, affect and action. Furthermore, 42% supposed that pupils' opinions are not taken into consideration when developing school work. And yet, the pupils' perceptions of support from the teacher have a direct impact on the pupils' interest and motivation towards schoolwork (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009).

9 Future implications in teacher training

Social and emotional learning is a long and complex process. Humphrey (2014) reminds, that in SEL training not enough attention is being paid to how the benefits of the training are being put to use in the actual work of a teacher. To enable investigating the sustainability of the SEL courses' outcomes, longitudinal data should be collected. In addition, observation or video recordings of classroom interaction might give valuable information about applying the SEL skills in real life. However, these methods need considerable resources, and investigating the benefits to all participants of SEL courses might be insuperable. Therefore, our suggestion for future study would include observation of a few participants. Teachers' learning diaries of SEL after the course would also be most interesting. Naturally, exploring the teachers' interaction skills using feedback from their pupils would help us to understand the phenomenon of SEL better.

Programs used in school designed for pupils mostly concentrate on e.g. cutting down bullying or learning feeling skills, which also help pupil's misfit for school. Actual rehabilitation or therapy is mainly taken care of by parties outside the school institution.

Good social skills have a significant impact on creating the atmosphere of the class such that learning in it is optimal. The teacher's good interactive skills increase the pupils' motivation for schoolwork, support the pupils' activities and increase the pupils' feelings of autonomy thus increasing well-being, increase the teachers' coping with their workload and enjoying school.

According to the results on comparison of international school achievements, PISA 2012 (OECD, 2013), there was a clear worsening in the results for Finnish pupils. According to the communiqué from the Ministry of Education and Culture there is correlation between weakened PISA results and decreased school favourableness both as for students and in society overall. In the communiqué, Minister of Education and Culture Krista Kiuru states that it is crucial to invest in the development and sustenance of learning and studying motivation (Ministry of Culture, 2013). This view is supported by the results from National school health survey of National Institute of Health and Welfare (THL, 2013), which clearly show that Finnish pupils do not really feel being part of the everyday life or decisions regarding themselves made at school. Developing teach-

ers' interactive skills could have an impact on the academic success of the pupil and might increase the pupil's sense and experience of being part of this.

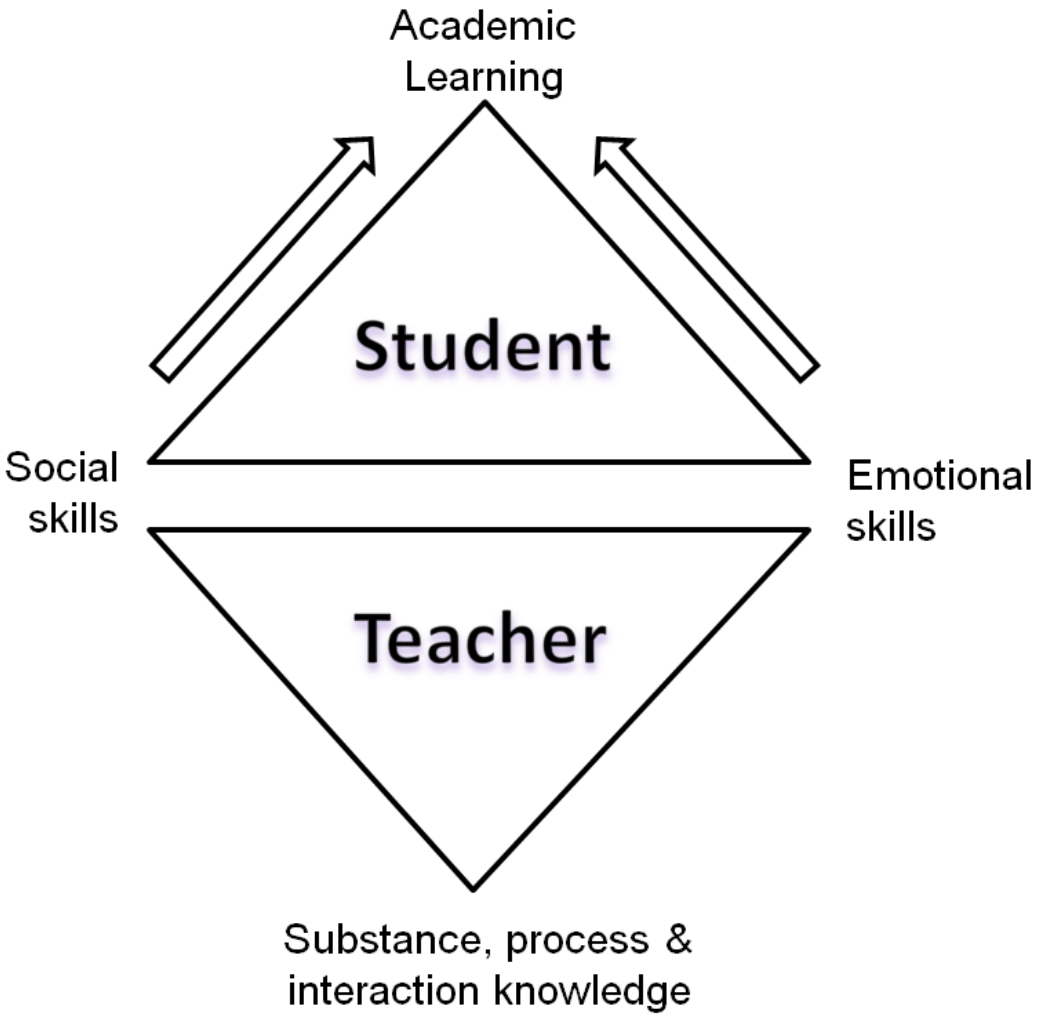

Figure 7, The effect of teacher's interaction skills on student's academic learning

Good interactive skills also have impact on teachers' mental wellbeing. According to Grayson and Alvarez (2008) those teachers who were able to create a positive relationship towards her/his pupils would more likely be able to preserve their working motivation and enthusiasm and enjoy their work. In addition, teachers' emotional distress had a clear connection with atmosphere elements in cooperation with parents, mutual relationships between pupils and interactive relationships within the working community. Interventions that aim at learning social interactive skills are apt to increase mutual trust, appreciation, respect and cooperation between individuals. This has direct effect on the learning environment through both pupils' and teachers' wellbeing (Roffey, 2012).

Negative emotional reactions decrease as satisfaction increases and the atmosphere improves (Talvio et al., 2013)

The importance of learning social and emotional skills may be understood as a way of ensuring academic learning. It may also be regarded as a means to decrease risk factors weakening the learning environment. This promotes pupils' learning and furthermost ensures the development of their lives in the most positive direction. The capability of, and will, to be an active part of a school class and a school as an institution also enables future incorporation to various working societies and capability to act constructively in them. This gain creates the qualifications to act as an active member of society.

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11 Appendices

11.1 Appendix A

Hei,

Olen Minna Berg ja opiskelen luokanopettajaksi Helsingin yliopiston kasvatuspsykologian koulutusohjelmassa. Teen pro gradu tutkimusta ja aiheenani on vuorovaikutus- ja tunneälytaidot.

Olisin todella kiitollinen jos voisit käyttää hetken lukeaksesi 5 tutkimuskysymystäni ja vastataksesi niihin. Kysymykset liittyvät koulumaailmaan ja opettajan työhön. Tulen kysymään samat kysymykset kahdesti, sekä kurssin aluksi että toiseen kertaan kurssin lopuksi.

Heti tallentaessani vastauksia annan jokaiselle vastaajalle koodin, mutta keräysvaiheessa on yksinkertaisinta jos jokainen vastaa omalla nimellään. Tästä seuraa se, että vain minä tiedän ihmisten henkilöllisyyden, muut tutkijat katsovat vain koodeja. Tämä toimintatapa takaa vastaajien anonymiteetin sekä sen, etteivät kenenkään yksittäisen vastaajan vastaukset ole tunnistettavissa tutkimuksen julkaisuissa.

Lämmin kiitos osallistumisestasi!

Mahdollisiin lisäkysymyksiin vastaan mielelläni

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11.2 Appendix B

Mitä sanoisit tai tekisit? – lomake
Nimi:_____
Päivämäärä:_____

Mieti ja kirjoita miten toimisit seuraavissa tilanteissa. Kaikki vastaukset käsitellään luottamuksellisesti.

1. Olet ollut retkellä oppilaidesi kanssa. Matkalla takaisin koululle oppilaasi Pekka lyö Kallea. Itse et nähnyt tilannetta, mutta Kallen nenästä tulee verta eikä poikien tarinat tapahtuneesta poikkea toisistaan. Kallella on ollut tapana käyttäytyä usein aggressiivisesti toisia oppilaita kohtaan. Sen sijaan Pekan käytös tässä tilanteessa tulee sinulle hieman yllätyksenä. Tilanne kuitenkin selvitetään koululla ja lähetät molempien poikien kotiin tiedot tapahtuneesta. Illalla Kallen äiti soittaa sinulle tuohtuneena tapahtuneesta, moittii sinut sekä aprikoi, onko hänen poikansa turvassa sinun luokallasi.

   Miten toimit tilanteessa?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   __

2. Kollegasi moittii sinua koska olet lähettänyt haastavaksi tunnetun oppilaasi hakemaan käytävän tulostimelta tulosteita ilman valvontaa. Et voi hyväksyä tätä koska mielestäsi myös haastavalle oppilaalle on annettava vastuuta.

   Kuinka vastaat?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

3. Oppilaasi nimittelee sinua selän takana. Satut kuulemaan asiasta ja haluat käydä asiasta keskustelun oppilaan kanssa.

   Mitä sanoisit?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

4. Eräs oppilaasi Anna on alkanut huolehtia siitä, että myös syrjitty oppilas Elli pääsee mukaan leikkeihin. Jäät Annan kanssa kahden.

   Kuinka reagoit?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

5. Oppilaasi jäävät kiinni siitä, että ovat vieneet naapuriluokasta lupaa kysymättä katuliidut ja piirtäneet koulun seinään.

   Miten reagoit?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

11.3 Appendix C

Vastaajan taustatietolomake

Nimi: _____
Vastaajan ikä _____v
Vastaajan sukupuoli: Mies_____ Nainen_____
Opintojen määrä (jos opinnot kesken): _____
Ylin koulutus
- ylioppilas _____
- maisteri _____
- muu _____

Työkokemus opettajana: _____v
Olen toiminut luokanopettajana _____
- aineenopettajana _____
- erityisopettajana _____
- muuna ammattikasvattajana _____

11.4 Appendix D

Tutkimuslupa
Nimeni on Minna Berg ja opiskelen Helsingin yliopiston käyttäytymistieteellisessä tiedekunnassa luokanopettajaksi. Pääaineeni on kasvatuspsykologia, johon myös pro gradu tutkimukseni liittyy.
Ohjaajinani toimivat professori Kirsti Lonka ja KM Markus Talvio
Tarkoituksenani on tutkia opettajien tunne- ja vuorovaikutustaitoja. Keskeisimpänä taustateoriana tutkimuksessani toimii Thomas Gordonin Toimiva koulu- teoria sekä Daniel Golemanin sosiaaliseen älyyn liittyvä teoria.
Tutkimukseni toteutetaan Avoimessa yliopistossa Tavoitteena työrauha – erilaisuus on rikkautta -kurssilla, jonka opettajana toimii Markus Talvio. Hän puoltaa tutkimusluvan myöntämistä. Verrokkiaineisto kerätään samaan aikaan pidettävältä ??? kurssilta.
Tutkimus tehdään kyselylomakkeella joka sisältää 5 avointa kysymystä. Sama kysely suoritetaan sekä kurssin aluksi, että sen lopuksi. Kyselylomakkeella olevat kysymykset on hyväksytetty molemmilla ohjaajilla ja niiden toimivuutta on testattu tutkimukseen osallistumattomilla peruskoulun luokanopettajilla.
Aineistoa käytetään luottamuksellisesti eikä yksittäisen vastaajan tunnistaminen ole mahdollista tutkimuksen julkaisuissa. Jokaiselta tutkimukseen osallistuvalta pyydetään erikseen lupaa vastausten käyttöön tutkimustarkoituksessa sekä kerrotaan, että heidän anonymiteettiään suojellaan ja että heillä on oikeus keskeyttää osallistuminen missä tahansa tutkimuksen vaiheessa. Lisäksi tutkimukseen osallistuvilla on mahdollisuus kurssin aikana esittää tutkijalle tutkimukseen liittyviä kysymyksiä.

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